

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
S/PRS - MR. KING (INFO)
H - MISS FOLGER (INFO)
IO/P - MR. BLACHLY
EUR/P - MR. JERABEK
NEA/IRN - MR. NAAS
AF/P - MRS. RUSSELL

----- 019549

O 232303Z DEC 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 280527

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING DECEMBER 23,
1974.

QUOTE: Q. BOB, I HAVE A TWO-PART QUESTION. WAS THE
SECRETARY AWARE WHILE HE WAS THE NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS
ADVISER OF ANY DOMESTIC SURVEILLANCE BY THE CIA? AND,
TWO, HAS HE ASKED MR. HELMS TO COME HOME FOR CONSULTA-
TIONS ON THIS QUESTION?

A. LET ME ANSWER YOUR SECOND ONE FIRST, IF I MAY, JUST
TO SAY THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WILL CO-OPERATE TO THE
FULLEST WITH APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION,
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AND IF A DULY CONSTITUTED CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE WERE TO

ASK AMBASSADOR HELMS TO TESTIFY, HE WOULD NATURALLY RETURN FOR THIS PURPOSE.

ON YOUR FIRST QUESTION, WITH REGARD TO ALLEGED DOMESTIC SURVEILLANCE OF AMERICAN CITIZENS, THE SECRETARY HAS NEVER SEEN ANY SURVEY OF AMERICAN CITIZENS BY THE CIA, AND HE DOESN'T KNOW IF ANY SUCH SURVEYS EXIST.

Q. THE QUESTION WAS WAS HE AWARE OF THE CIA DOING THIS SORT OF THING.

A. WELL, I THINK I CAN CONFIDENTLY SAY NO HERE IN VIEW OF THE ANSWER I'VE JUST GIVEN.

Q. TO GET BACK TO THE FIRST THING YOU SAID ABOUT AMBASSADOR HELMS.

A. YES, MARVIN.

Q. IS ONE TO UNDERSTAND FROM THIS THAT UNLESS A CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ASKS HIM TO COME BACK TO TESTIFY ON THIS PROBLEM HE WILL NOT COME BACK TO EVEN BE QUESTIONED BY THE SECRETARY ABOUT IT?

A. WELL, LET ME PUT IT THIS WAY. THE SECRETARY HAS NO PLANS TO HAVE AMBASSADOR HELMS RETURN.

Q. HAVE YOU GOTTEN A REQUEST YET FROM ANY COMMITTEE?

A. TO MY KNOWLEDGE NO.

Q. BOB, DO YOU KNOW WHETHER THE SECRETARY HAS ASKED THE AMBASSADOR FOR ANY KIND OF CONFIRMATION AS TO THE VERACITY OF THESE REPORTS?

A. AS FAR AS I'M AWARE, THE ANSWER IS NO.

Q. HAS HE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH AMBASSADOR HELMS SINCE THIS PUBLISHED REPORT APPEARED?

A. I WOULD HAVE TO CHECK ON THAT. AGAIN, FROM MY CON-

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VERSATIONS WITH THE SECRETARY THIS MORNING MY IMPRESSION IS NO, BUT I DID NOT ASK HIM THAT SPECIFIC QUESTION.

Q. DOES THE SECRETARY FEEL THAT IF THE CIA HAD CONDUCTED DOMESTIC SURVEILLANCE HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN ABOUT IT?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANY FURTHER COMMENT ON THE STORY.

Q. BOB, I'M STILL A LITTLE CONFUSED ON ONE POINT. YOU LEAVE US WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT THE SECRETARY DOESN'T TAKE THIS ALL VERY SERIOUSLY BECAUSE HE HAS NOT ASKED HELMS FOR ANY INFORMATION ABOUT IT, HE HAS NOT ASKED FOR HELMS TO COME BACK TO PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION TO HIM -- ASIDE FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE -- AND I WONDER IF THAT IS, IN FACT, THE IMPRESSION YOU WISH TO LEAVE.

A. I THINK I WILL GO BACK TO THE ANSWER THAT I GAVE TO BERNIE'S SECOND QUESTION. I GAVE YOU THAT ANSWER FIRST, ON THE QUESTION OF THE SECRETARY, IN ESSENCE, HE DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS, ON THE QUESTION OF ANY SURVEY, DOMESTIC SURVEILLANCE, OF AMERICAN CITIZENS.

Q. BOB, HAS THE SECRETARY RECEIVED THE PROXMIRE LETTER IN CONNECTION WITH THE RECALL OF HELMS?

A. NO.

Q. HAS NOT RECEIVED A LETTER?

A. NO.

Q. BOB, IS THE LEGAL OFFICE OR ANYONE ELSE IN THE DEPARTMENT LOOKING INTO HELMS' VARIOUS TESTIMONIES BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES FOR THE POSSIBILITY THAT HE MAY HAVE COMMITTED PERJURY?

A. TO MY KNOWLEDGE NO.

Q. BOB, I WANTED TO GO BACK TO THE CIA STORY, JUST AS MAYBE A BUREAUCRATIC FUNCTIONAL QUESTION. AS NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER FOR THE PRESIDENT AT THE TIME, WAS IT UNCLASSIFIED

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DR. KISSINGER'S DUTY TO PASS ON ALL CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY PROJECTS; OR WOULD HE NOT HAVE SEEN SOME PROJECTS THAT WERE DONE BY THE AGENCY?

A. I WOULD ASSUME THAT HE WOULD HAVE SEEN THOSE PROJECTS DONE BY THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY THAT CONCERN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS.

Q. ALL OF THEM?

A. I WOULD ASSUME THAT EITHER HE OR HIS STAFF, BECAUSE ANYTHING TO DO WITH NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS OBVIOUSLY WENT THROUGH THE NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER'S OFFICE OR THE OFFICES OF HIS STAFF.

Q. AND THEN IF HE DIDN'T -- AS YOU SAY HE DIDN'T?

A. WHAT I SAID -- I WAS VERY SPECIFIC HERE -- I SAID THAT HE NEVER SAW ANY SURVEYS, ALLEGED SURVEYS, OF AMERICAN CITIZENS, DOMESTIC SURVEYS OF AMERICAN CITIZENS, BY THE CIA. AND HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW IF ANY SUCH ALLEGED SURVEYS EXIST.

Q. YOU SAY "SURVEYS". DO YOU MEAN "SURVEILLANCE"?

I DON'T THINK ANY OF US ARE TALKING ABOUT SURVEYS.

A. WELL, ALL RIGHT, DOMESTIC SURVEILLANCE OF AMERICAN CITIZENS AND REPORTS THEREOF. THAT'S IT, TO BE MORE PRECISE.

Q. AND THEN IF SUCH A THING DID EXIST, IN OTHER WORDS, IS MY QUESTION, THEN YOUR ANSWER WOULD IMPLY SOME DECEPTION ON THE PART OF THE CIA IN REGARD TO WHAT WAS LATER TOLD TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY STAFF?

A. I DON'T WANT TO COMMENT ON THAT AT ALL, I MEAN TO GET INTO IMPLIED DECEPTION, ETC. I'M TRYING TO GIVE YOU A STRAIGHT-FORWARD STATEMENT HERE WITH REGARD TO THE QUESTION I WAS ASKED WITH REGARD TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S HAVING SEEN OR NOT SEEN CERTAIN REPORTS IN HIS CAPACITY AS THE SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT.
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Q. BOB, HAS THE SECRETARY SPOKEN WITH MR. COLBY TODAY OR YESTERDAY ABOUT WHETHER IN FACT THIS STUFF WENT ON?

A. I WOULD ASSUME THAT HE HAS SPOKEN TO HIM, YES. BUT I DO NOT KNOW THE CONTENTS OF THE CONVERSATION.

Q. BOB, THE PRESIDENT INDICATED THAT HE HAD SOME PARTIAL KNOWLEDGE OF THIS SITUATION BEFORE THE TIMES ARTICLE WAS PRINTED. DID THE SECRETARY HAVE SUCH KNOWLEDGE BEFORE?

A. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, HE DID NOT.

Q. SO THE FIRST TIME HE KNEW OF SUCH A PROGRAM WAS WHEN HE READ IT IN THE NEWSPAPERS OR WAS TOLD OF THE NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT?

A. I CAN'T BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN OF THAT, KEN. I MEAN I WOULD ASSUME THAT THAT'S CORRECT, BUT I DID NOT GO INTO THAT SPECIFIC POINT WITH HIM.

Q. BOB, DID YOU SAY FLATLY EARLIER THAT HE DID NOT KNOW

ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF THIS PROGRAM WHILE IT WAS IN OPERATION?

A. I SAID THAT THE SECRETARY DOES NOT EVEN KNOW IF ANY SUCH REPORTS OF DOMESTIC SURVEILLANCE OF AMERICAN CITIZENS EXIST. THAT IS WHAT I SAID.

Q. ANOTHER THING, BOB. DOES THE SECRETARY TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY? I'M TRYING TO ASK MY EARLIER QUESTION IN A

DIFFERENT WAY.

A. YES, THE SECRETARY DOES. HE HAS READ THIS REPORT, AND HE, AS I HAVE INDICATED IN THREE OR FOUR ANSWERS HERE, IS UNAWARE OF A LOT OF THE ALLEGATIONS IN THE REPORT. AND HE DID NOT SPECIFY ANY OF THIS TO ME, BUT HE OBVIOUSLY DOES TAKE IT SERIOUSLY.

Q. I'M STILL NOT CLEAR ON YOUR FIRST RESPONSE. ARE YOU UNCLASSIFIED

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SAYING THAT THE SECRETARY WAS NOT AWARE THAT THE CIA ENGAGED IN ANY SURVEILLANCE OF AMERICAN CITIZENS IN THIS COUNTRY?

A. DOMESTIC SURVEILLANCE. I AM, YES.

Q. THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?

A. YES, RIGHT. END QUOTE. KISSINGER

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